

1. Historical Background of the country and people

The word "Thai" means "free" and therefore "Thailand" means "The Land of the Free"

Formerly conflicting opinions and theories prevailed as to the origins of the Thais. Even in two decades before this we could speak with more certainty that they originated in Northwestern Szechuan of China about 4,500 years ago. But after the discovery of many instruments and artifacts at the village of Ban Chiang, Nongkarn District, Udornthani Province, the theory about the origins of Thai people have been changed into a new one. It might be that the Thai people settled down here in Thailand and then scattered to various parts of the world even to some parts of China. This was due to the 14 Carbon test of Artifacts which showed that Thailand might be the first place of Bronze Age ever discovered in any part of the world, for it has some artifacts older than what was unearthed in the Near East by about 500 years.

"Siam" was the name of the country well known to the world until 1939 and again between 1945 and 1949; then on May 11, 1949 there was a proclamation changing the name of the country into "Prathet Thai" or "Thailand"

2. Six Major periods of the Thai History

1. Ancient period . 4500 years ago when the Thai people settled down in north western Szechuan and scattered in the fan like manner along the valley of the ~~Yangtze~~ Yangtze River.
2. Nanchao Period 588 years (650-1238) The kingdom was situated in Yunnan in the southern part of China.
3. Sukhothai period 128 years (1238-1350)
Sukhothai was the first capital city when the Thai people moved and settled down in the northern part of Siam overcoming the Khmers' influence. There were 6 kings altogether of "Pra Ruang" dynasty during the period of 128 years.
4. Ayudhya Period 417 years (1350-1767) With the new dynasty, Ayudhya was the first capital ^{city} of Siam. Situated in the central part of Siam. There were 34 kings of various dynasties during the 417 years.
5. ~~Phon~~ Dhonburi Period - only 15 years (1767-1782).
After the fall of Ayudhya, King Tak Sin established Dhonburi the new capital on the west bank of Chao Phraya River opposite to Modern Bangkok.

6. Bangkok or Ratanakosin Period began in 1782. Bangkok has been established the present capital city of Thailand under the reigns of nine successive Kings of Chakri dynasty for 190 years to this day.

Thai Culture

The word 'Culture' means 'way of life' or "Social heritage." It embraces all forms of human response to environments. Different meaning between culture and civilization is that culture includes all aspects of way of life whether they may be primitive or modern ones while civilization means only "the stage of being brought out of barbarism or the advanced stage in social development."

Culture may be divided into various aspects as follows:

Linguistic, Aesthetic, Customary and Traditional, Material Culture and spiritual Culture.

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Another word is 'Sua', it can be pronounced in three different ways meaning: tiger, a mat and a coat. In writing we have ~~some~~ some symbols above the written word to guide the reading. Thailand has her own characters including figures, compared with England which uses Roman characters and Arabic figures.

Aesthetic Culture — means harmony, beauty and sweetness of what was made and ~~invested~~ invented by human beings. The word 'fine arts' includes painting, ~~sets~~ sculpture, architecture, drama and music. The Thai paintings of Ancient time discovered at a Southern province of Thailand, Yala, were dated between the 10th and 13th Centuries. The first fairly well preserved painting has been discovered at Ayutthya ancient-monastery which was founded in 1424 A.D.

The Thai sculpture is mostly the arts of forming the images of the Buddha. It is of five periods:

Chiangsaen period	- 11th - 13th	Century A.D.	
Sukhothai	" - 13th - 15th	"	" "
U-Thong	" = 13th - 15th	"	" "
Ayutthya	" = 1350 - 1767		" "
Ratanakosin or Bangkok	" = 1782 - 1868	A.D.	

The Thai art architecture besides making residential houses is mostly connected with royal palace and monastery buildings and pagodas which are of their own typical structure as may be seen in Bangkok.

The Thai drama is of many kinds such as Khon or the masked play, Lakhon Nok (played by both men and women) Lakhon Nai (played by women only) and so on. Thai classic dances are mostly some parts of dramatic entertainments.

The Thai music instruments are of four kinds: the instrument of slipping or snapping, drawing, percussion and woodwind.

Another kind of Thai art is the intaid work of the mother-of-pearl used to decorate window and door panels of the shrine hall in the monastery and some utensils.

Customary and traditional culture of Thailand is mostly on the basis of human relation and Buddhism, such as when the sun enters the zodiac of Aries generally on April 13 every year. The Thai people celebrate Songkran Festival by paying respect to their parents, old relatives, pouring water and perfumes into their hands and

6.
in return their parents and old relatives will utter some words of blessing for their happiness and prosperity. Besides this they go to the nearest monastery paying homage to Buddhist monks, venerating and pouring water and perfumes at the image of the Buddha as a kind of worship, freeing birds and fish as a gift of freedom and life and finally dedicating meritorious parts to the departed ancestors (~~Star~~?) various kinds of entertainments will follow after that.

Modesty. paying respect to the parents, the elders, the teachers and Buddhist monks, accepting and following admonition of parents and teachers are cultural structure of the Thai custom and tradition.

Speaking of Thai spiritual culture, we cannot leave Buddhism aside because Buddhism has played its important roles in the way of life of the Thai people from Sukhothai period (700 years ago) up till now.

There have been some statements in the stone inscriptions of Sukhothai period as may be ~~at~~ quoted in essence as follows:

Good are the Sukhothai people. They are of generous and moral habits, always observing precepts and giving alms. The people of this Sukhothai, old and young, male and female, all of them are pious, cherishing their faith in Buddhism, each observing precepts during the rainy season. After the Lent, the Kathin (the ceremony of Saffron robe presentation) is observed for a period of one month."

The Thai people who adhere to various faiths as shown in percentage by the office of national statistics are as follows:

Buddhists	93.6
Muslim	3.9
Christians	0.6
Others	1.9

There are more than 300,000 Buddhist-monks and novices and more than 25,000 Buddhist monasteries throughout the Country

There are two Buddhist Universities and about 7000 schools

8.

For Buddhist education run by ecclesiastical authorities. These schools and universities do not include the more than 10,000 schools for boys and girls which are situated in the monasteries.

Inclination Influence on Taxi Laws

The last of these laws is furnished by the
Preamble. Kach and Ral-chikan are running
(the) largest sort of (Rum T) or (the) house of
wines. Since when Ayowaya was destroyed
by the Burmese in 1767 about 90% of the
kingdom remained poor and the rest
time perished. Now laws were made
work on them and not before 1804 when
a case for the law. A case came upon
law court. In case the court gave divorce
to a husband and wife. The husband
did not agree with it. The judge
appealed against it. Not only the judge
was on the side of the ruler but existing
law it appeared to be unjust. Kach Ral-chikan
felt the necessity of examining all the
existing laws. He set up a Committee
for the purpose. The Committee was made
up of the laws made before at Pali
times. Whatever laws were not in accordance
with the law were to be changed to agree
with the law. They could be restored to
their former form. The Committee continued
its labors for eleven months and sub-
mitted its report which on the 1st of
new information became the law for
Thailand. Since it follows Pali Canon it
is called the law for purpose of religious
conduct of society.

From the brief case was given last
 Comm. list, as small - 2000. as should be
 clear, it was not suggest any fresh
 Cars but to examine only existing

reeler, at *thamnosaccha*, *hansik*
thamnosaccha, into *thamnosaccha* with
thamnosaccha And what is the name of
thamnosaccha? In a name of *thamnosaccha*
thamnosaccha is:

A ceremony at the Shamashan, an
ancient Chinese shrine & cemetery,
in the Ming Dynasty, commemorating
the founding of the Chinese Republic.
The latter part of the ceremony at Shamashan

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Indian Influence on Thai Law

The last Thai Law is furnished by an
Praman on Kutmai Ratchakan in 1804
(the 22nd year of Rama I.) or in 1805
when Siam was under British influence
lay at Burmese in 1767 about 90% of the
legal material was available at that
time provided. Now laws were made con-
sistent with the old law until 1804 when
a case forced an A case come up to
the Court. In that case the court gave divorce
to a husband and wife. The husband
was not agree with the judgment and
appealed against it. The case was judged
was on evidence. The rules then existing
but it appeared to be unjust. King Rama I
felt the necessity of examining all the
rules then existing. He set up a Committee
for the purpose. The Committee was made
up of 100 members chosen at Pali
Munich, wherever they were at various
places they were to be changed to agree
with the old law, could be restored to
their former form. The Committee continued
to discuss for three months and sub-
mitted a report which on the 1st of
new legislation became the law for
Siam. Since it follows Pali Canon in
its purpose of moral
conduct of society

and / From the brief we were given last
Committee, no small work. It should be
clear, it was not suggest any fresh
laws but to examine and existing

rules, at Shama Sutta, Samadhi
Sutta, etc., and conformity with the
Pali Canon. And what is the aim of
Shama Sutta? In the words of Prince
Dhammasekara etc.

According to the Shama Sutta, the
ideal man should be a peaceful
in the world, virtuous, constantly
repeating the five commandments...
He later points to Shama Sutta

... to keep at four principles of justice
namely: 1. to secure the right or wrong of all
service or disservice rendered according to
merit or righteousness and to that end, to acquire
riches enough to be able to give more and
to maintain the prosperity of the state through
riches and good government.

It would be obvious from the above that
the law is not in a narrow Dharmasattha
alone and that it is in place of a
work of Manu, the novel is a Pantheistic
a Sanskrit Dharmasattha based on a
basic purpose of a constitution of a monarch
as dispenser of justice as well. The law
in a text, which is for the people and is
Sanskrit. Part of the Dharmasattha
is missing.

The Thai, which may be derived from India
something in the field of law, does not concern
the law. They introduced a concept in it.
Even in a basic conception they brought about
the change. The change was in a revolutionary
law for the substitution and finalisation and
derivation and procedure. The Dharmasattha
then is a fundamental concept
(in the Dharmasattha) as a category of law
(in the Dharmasattha). The law is a concept in

Rajadharma, a Ordinance of the King
The law was absorbed into the Dharmasattha
(in the Dharmasattha) as a derivative category which have
a reference and approximation to the categories
of Manu. All are included in the Dharmasattha
which is a concept in the Dharmasattha because
the law is a concept by the law in 1805. The
interesting to note is that the law has been
applied in Thai texts on law. A question
between Thai law and the Dharmasattha
more far, should prove quite a useful

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1. The old Siamese Constitution of the
Monarchy, F. S. P. XXXVI (1947), p. 63.

The Indian in Florence is marked on a conception
of monarchy in Thailand as well. There are
three principles on which it rests: 1. The
monarch is a patriarchal figure (Sukhathai
period) and is person & communicated with God,
the principle of divine kingship and therefore
there an ideal monarch is a monarch of
righteousness. deriving in a hierarchy
virtues and pursuing at four proper modes
of conduct. The reason of conduct is
a moralized vision concept of conduct and
the sovereign is universal. It was as such
view was was later was a model in Thailand
in a time of King Rama I. The consequence
of all these views, of course, was, the
absolute monarchy, the kingship was a
symbol of the state itself, whose function was
not legislation but the preservation of
a sacred law.

Complexity in the Thai Religious System: An Interpretation

A. Thomas Kirsch

(is associate Professor of Anthropology and Asian Studies at Cornell University)

Complexity has characterized the Thai religious system since at least 1292, when the well known inscription of Rama Kamhaeng was composed. (A. B. Griswold & Prasert Na Nagara, "The Inscription of King Rama Kamhaeng of Sukhodaya (1292 A.D.)", *Journal of the Siam Society*, LIX (1971), pp 179-228, is the most recent translation of this inscription, it includes a discussion of previous translations.) This inscription not only celebrates the devotion of his people of Sukhothai to Theravada Buddhism but also notes a special relationship between the prosperity of the Kingdom and reverence for Phra-Khaphung, a "spirit-deity" living in a nearby mountain. Phra Khaphung is characterized as a phi-thewada, combining phi (an indigenous Thai form meaning "spirit" "ghost") with thewada (a form derived from Hindu-Buddhist cosmology and meaning "deity"). This classification of Phra Khaphung suggests that a process of merging two once distinct religious traditions had already begun.

The co-existence of indigenous and non-indigenous elements in Thai religion has persisted throughout subsequent Thai history. For example, when Rama I sought to reestablish order after the Burmese sack of the capital of Ayutthaya in 1767, one of his first decrees listed the various

types of "spirits" (phī) and "deities" (thawadā) that might-
legitimately be honoured by sacrifices. However, the king
reminded his subjects that good fortune and affliction alike
ultimately result from "Karma", not from the actions of
spirits or gods. He emphasized that the Triple Gems
of Buddhism were higher than all other laws, and that
no other religious precepts could be held superior to
those of Buddhism. (This decree, issued on 21st Aug. 1782,
is cited in H.R.H. Chula Chakrahongse, *Lords of Life: The
Paternal Monarchy of Bangkok, 1782-1932*. (London: Reedman 1960)
p. 89. See also R. Lingat (ed.), *Pramān Kotmāi ratchakān
Hīmyang* (Legal Codes of King Rama I), Bangkok: Thammasat-
University, 1938.)

Observers of the current Thai religious situation,
rural or urban, have noted that Thai religion still manifests
similar complexity. (B. J. Terretwiel, "A model for the study
of Thai Buddhism" [hereafter MSTB].)

This intricate mix of indigenous and non-indigenous
elements is not the religious pluralism of the west, a
situation in which tolerance exists for a competition
among a number of distinct and autonomous faiths
for the religious adherence of the populace. Thai
religious complexity is of the sort commonly characterized
as syncretic, in which elements derived from several
historically discrete traditions have combined

to form a single distinctive Tradition. In such a situation, individuals may simultaneously hold beliefs or practice rituals derived from different Traditions, without any apparent sense of incongruity.

The Thai share this situation of religious complexity with other South and Southeast Asian peoples who commonly identify themselves as Theravada Buddhists: The peoples of Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos. In fact it has frequently been observed that Theravada Buddhism is never the sole religious component in these societies, that there are invariably "non-Buddhist" religious elements present as well, leading H. D. Evers to suggest that Theravada Buddhism is, in some sense, an "incomplete" religion. At any rate, the fact of religious complexity in Theravada Buddhist societies has been a matter of interest for some time. And two broad strategies have been used to investigate it: one approach might be characterized as historical, the other as a more synchronic structural-functional or social science approach.

The historical approach to understanding Thai religion is exemplified by the efforts of such scholars as K. Landon and R. Le May. They distinguished the various elements that make up Thai religion, principally by identifying their historical origin—e.g.,

indigenous - animist. Brahmanic, Buddhist. These constituent-elements were further identified with the various epochs in their history in which they were assumed to have been first adopted by the Thai. This approach has often produced what might be called the "stratigraphic" and the 'thin veneer' perspectives. Thai (or ~~Siam~~ Siam, Burmese, etc) religion is seen as made up of a number of discrete "layers" of religious belief and practice, one piled haphazardly on the other. The practitioners of this approach seem to have assumed that religion is intrinsically irrational. But they also seem to have been impressed with the apparent persistence of indigenous - animistic elements, which suggested to them that the non-indigenous religious elements formed a thin veneer over the basically animistic propensities of the nominally Buddhist masses (i.e. scratch a Buddhist; find an animist) emphasizing historical origins, followers of this approach have generally left unexplored a number of questions about the relationships between the various religious elements, questions of special interest to the followers of the other approach to religious complexity.

The main aims of the Structural-functional approach have been to investigate the relationships among the various religious components found in Theravada Buddhist societies, and/or to discover any social correlates of religious beliefs and practices in the nonreligious sphere of these societies. This approach is ~~favoured~~ favored by most contemporary anthropologists and other social scientists interested in Theravada Buddhism. Although none of the scholars who have pursued the structural-functional approach has ignored the historical depth of Theravada Buddhism, or the religious and non-religious spheres of the societies they have studied, their primary aim has been a synchronic analysis. That is, they have sought to demonstrate relationships between the various religious components, or between the religious and nonreligious spheres independent of the historical contexts in which they are found. The structural-functional approach has been extremely productive, highlighting agreements on such matters as the primacy of Buddhism in these complex religious systems. It has also produced some disagreements of interpretation - such as whether we can see a single syncretized religious system or a number of distinct and alternative religious systems.

This is well illustrated in the works of M. Ames and M. Spiro. In their studies of Sinhalese and Burmese religion, respectively, Ames and Spiro each distinguish two components: A Theravada Buddhist component and a non-Theravada Buddhist "component". Ames labels his non-Buddhist component "magical-animism". Spiro prefers "supernaturalism" or simply "animism". Although both recognize a degree of internal complexity in each of the two components, apparently the Buddhist one has been

identified through a number of unambiguous criteria, while the non-Buddhist one seems to have a residual character. That is, any religious element not identifiable as "Buddhist" is classed as "non-Buddhist" or animist. Given this distinction, Ames and Spiro conclude that Buddhism maintains a paramount position with Sinhalese, Burmese religion. But they disagree on the relationship between the two components, on whether there is a single integrated religious system or multiple - and perhaps antagonistic - systems. Ames sees in Sinhalese religion a functional division of labor between Buddhism and magical animism: the Buddhist component specializing in ultimate and other-worldly concerns, the magical-animist component in more mundane, this-worldly matters. He also proposes that the magical-animist component performs key socialization and therapeutic functions for the adherents of Buddhism, linking both components into a single religious system. Spiro sees a similar division in Burmese religion: Buddhism being concerned with the supermundane, and animism with the mundane. But he maintains that Buddhism and Burmese supernaturalism do not form a single syncretized religious system. Though he does see Buddhism as paramount, Spiro proposes that Buddhism and animism each

represent distinct and - to some extent - alternative religious systems.

Terwiel has recently suggested that some of the differences in interpretation respecting religious complexity in those societies where we find Theravada Buddhism may be due to differences in theoretical perspective. Certainly Ames and Spiro represent - different theoretical preferences within anthropology - a sociological emphasis and a psychological emphasis, respectively. However, some of the differences recorded seem to ~~at~~ be due to the unique historical situations of the societies under consideration. For example, caste considerations play some role in Sinhalese religion, while caste has not been a factor in most Southeast Asian religions. Other differences also exist. For example, the relative stress placed on novicehood in Burmese religion seems to contrast with the stress on monkhood in Sri Lanka and Thailand.

One problem in the study of those societies in which Theravada Buddhism is found is the temptation to treat both Buddhism and Buddhist society as single enduring entities that can be abstracted from the flux of particular social life. In fact, such an approach can be useful. But we can also view Buddhism and Buddhist society as variables, conditioned by the circumstances in which they are found - including the - non - Buddhist religious elements invariably found with Buddhism and the historical circumstances of each.

Buddhist Society. From this perspective, the Religious Systems in which Buddhism plays a dominant role, and the Societies in which these religious systems are found, represent a range of variations rather than a single entity. Such an approach may allow us to see relationships within and between both the complex religious systems and the societies influenced by Theravada Buddhism. It may also pave the way for a truly comparative study of Theravada Buddhism as a living religion, of its impact on the lives of real people rather than sociological abstractions. It is in this context that I shall sketch out a perspective on Thai religious complexity which may reveal similarities to and differences from other Theravada Buddhist Societies. That is, the Thai situation viewed as part of a range of variation found in Theravada Buddhist Societies.

The Thai case is similar to those of Sri Lanka and Burma in that Buddhism maintains a paramount position within a complex religious situation. However I distinguish three components in Thai religion (rather than the two of Ames and Spiro) Buddhism, a Brahmanistic Component, and an animistic Component. Each will be examined along a number of dimensions: goal orientation and world-view, ritual, specialists, participants, and social focus. I shall indicate some of the ways these three components

are interrelated to form a perduring pattern; hence my concern is primarily structural - functional. However I shall also set out an historical perspective in which the formation and development of this pattern may be viewed, and suggest some ways this pattern has undergone changes in recent years.

Theravada Buddhism in Thai religion

Rama Khamhaeng's inscription is only one of many that indicate that by the thirteenth century the Thai had established a number of powerful states in the area now part of northern Thailand. These inscriptions also indicate that Theravada Buddhism occupied a prominent place in these states, although the specific agencies through which the Thai first encountered Buddhism are not completely clear. From the fourteenth century on, the major center of Thai power shifted southward to Ayutthaya, which was influenced in important respects by the Hinduized Khmer, especially after the Thai conquest of Angkor in the late fourteenth century. Despite these Khmer influences, however, Buddhism retained its paramount position in the Ayutthayan religious system. In the eighteenth century a further southward shift in Thai power took place, centering it on Bangkok. Rama I's inscription reiterates - at the very foundation of what was to become the modern Thai state - the centrality of Buddhism to the Thai. In contemporary Thailand, Buddhism is recognized as the state religion and enjoys special government support, although recent constitutions have guaranteed freedom of religion. The Thai King must be a Buddhist, to maintain his role as defender of the faith. The official sanction of Buddhism merely formalizes and affirms the

Commitments and attitudes of the Thai people generally. For them there is close link between being Thai and being Buddhist.

Theravada Buddhism maintains its unity and continuity through a common core of doctrines and rituals sustained and perpetuated by the monastic institution (the Sangha). Some generalizations about sophisticated Buddhism might well apply to any Buddhist society. I will argue that, in Thai society, the values and beliefs of Buddhism are not restricted to a small group of virtuosos and literati but influence the mass of Thai. These values and beliefs set the religious context that has shaped the institutional fabric of Thai society and in which the Thai live their every day lives. Buddhist values, conceptions, and attitudes color virtually all aspects of Thai life, pervading the Thai attitude toward the world in which they live.

Buddhist Goal Orientations & World view.

Philosophical Buddhism postulates two levels of reality: one, the phenomenal world of everyday experience, a world of ignorance and illusion; the other, the world of the Karmically Conditioned, the domain of ultimate religious reality. It should be noted that these two levels of reality are not completely distinct and separate worlds; they are two perspectives on the same world. These two perspectives on reality are based in a number of key Buddhist doctrines, in particular those of Karma and of multiple rebirth. Karma holds that each act carries its own load of religious merit (Bun - บุญ) and/or demerit (Lāp - ลาภ) which automatically accrues to the actor. Multiple rebirth postulates that one works out the implications of his merits and demerits over a long series of lifetimes. Buddhism also locates the religious causes of suffering and of evil in action in the world, action motivated by

desire and attachment to worldly things. Since the causes of suffering are located in the world, the aim of the Buddhist is to free himself from desire and attachment, to escape from the world, to gain nirvana or "extinction." The formal goal of escaping from the clutches of Karma is the basis for characterizing Buddhism as radically other worldly.

In Thailand, as in other Buddhist societies, knowledge of sophisticated doctrines and striving to attain Nirvana are restricted to extremely dedicated monks and possibly a few laymen. Though Buddhists, most of Thai do not aspire to such an abstract religious goal as nirvana. The mass of Thai Buddhists aspire to a more proximate version of the ultimate goal, a sojourn in paradise (Savān - สวรรค์) and/or an enhanced status in some future life.

Such aspirations may appear to savor of a this-worldly attitude, but they should not be viewed as simple inversions of the other worldly thrust of Buddhist thought. A time in paradise or an enhanced rebirth status are deemed to be appropriate rewards for proper behavior, rewards that signify one is moving along the path to the more difficult and abstract ultimate goal. Such pervasive and popular tales as the Phra Watsandon Chadok (Vessantara Jataka) not only provide lay Buddhists with exemplars of proper modes of behavior involving renunciation and compassion; they also serve to remind them that their religious life is a long and difficult journey worked out over a series of lifetimes with numerous stopping points. The main point of articulation between a Thai

lay person and Buddhist values and beliefs is not through such esoteric doctrines as Karma, or even such formulations as the Four Noble Truths or Eightfold Path. Most Thai are linked to Buddhism through popular beliefs about merit (bun) and an pervasive belief system connected with beliefs, merit-making (wan bun)

I read about merit and merit accumulation seem to be ubiquitous in Thailand. Individuals frequently account for events and experiences in their lives in terms of their relative store of merit; all situations, situations, and events can - potentially, at least - be interpreted and

explained in terms of movement. In doctrinal terms, action should not be thought of as the realization of Karma - a general concept past time or need. It is the same as in simpler terms, each individual might be viewed as being a balance of accumulated merits and demerits. One's moral actions are aimed at restoring this balance in a favorable direction, moving one further along the path to the ultimate religious goal. Popular belief affirms what sophisticated doctrine teaches: an inner balance of some sort better or more favorable than most others. Both scientific and religious and popular belief sanction the notion of a more or less an inherent inequalities among humans with respect to their moral status. Further, this view is crystallized in doctrine and popular belief by elaborate cosmological hierarchies including all sentient beings: gods (devatā), human beings (manuṣa), spirits (phū), animals (sad) and elements (preta).

This cosmological hierarchy forms a basic part of the Buddhist world-view and provides a 'perspective' on the individual's struggle to characterize Buddhism. In contrast to more descriptive and collective approaches, the classic Hindu belief, Buddhism emphasizes the individual's moral and spiritual fall. But at the same time, it assumes that an individual is not completely free. His/her moral life within a hierarchical social structure and differentiated universe includes a variety of other acting beings. Indeed, the Buddhist message is, in part, to free oneself from attachments to such other beings, in order to rise higher in moral hierarchy. We shall see that the various dimensions of this hierarchy are manifested within the context of Buddhist rituals, and that its perpetuation is equally held in its social value.

A final observation about Buddhist values and world-view concerns its ethnocentric elements found in both Theravadin and popular Thai Buddhism. This Buddhist orientation might be characterized as: "Be merit - mobile"! Neither passive contemplation nor quietistic acceptance of one's fate with resignation to one's balance and more exacting attainment of proximal or distant Buddhist goals. The Buddhist mind - knows no other way. Certain individuals participate in selection of the selective of merit; at national context of merit - making activities.

Bushnell's Ritual.

[illegible]

2000 - 2001 - 2002

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Sangha. For example, when a general ideal is held then should serve for a time in the Sangha. Though not all do, many spend at least a rainy season at monasteries. It is also widely believed that much of the education and general civilization gained by the over-2000 monks, particularly his mother - who is herself carried from the Sangha. Monastic service has an ideological effect. Men who have served are raw (dip), "Raw" men are thought to be poor marriage risks, so "ripe" men may have an advantage on the marriage market. Monastic service may also provide an enrichment of prestige, and possibly training in useful skills to be exploited on leaving the Sangha. And in Sangha has been an important vehicle for upward mobility in Thai society. Such beliefs and practices - which ensure a steady flow of men into the Sangha, thereby perpetuating the Buddhist hierarchical order - are so pervasive as to suggest that the maintenance of the Buddhist order is more than a religious value in the narrow sense; it is a broadly based social value as well.

The Sangha is more than a symbol of Buddhist values and world view, it is also an organization. In modern times the Sangha organization has been increasingly formalized and centralized - in many respects paralleling the bureaucratic organization of the Thai government. If anything, the Sangha penetrates more deeply into all reaches and levels of Thai society than the government does. This may be why the government has found it less fuel, in its efforts to create a national polity, to emphasize its close traditional relationship between Buddhism and the state, and to actively seek Sangha support for a variety of programmes relating to economic development and political integration. Indeed the organizational structure of the Sangha provides a kind of skeleton for a Thai national moral community in which persons from all walks of life and regions of the country can identify.

Social Focus and Participation.

The Buddhist moral community and the Thai national community are intricately interrelated. Buddhist symbols, Sangha, monks, Buddhist images, temples and ceremonies are universally given special deference and respect, and concrete support of Buddhist institutions is viewed as good and service is substantial. The motto of Thai society - "Duty" for Buddhism, viewed society-wise, with support for Buddhism is continuous. However, there are differences in the scope of involvement of individuals.

as well as to sex and stage in life cycle. For example, the degree of involvement of women with Buddhism is relatively constant until, with advancing age, it may increase. Men's involvement is more variable though it may also be more intense at particular points. While a monk, a man's involvement with Buddhism is virtually total. But in lay life, it is typically more sporadic and less intense. Indeed, with advancing age, men (like women) may retire from secular activities and increase their Buddhist involvement.

The commitment of Thai, individually or collectively, to Buddhist values and world view is nearly universal and is more than narrowly religious. Aside from specifically religious beliefs and ritual forms, Buddhism has supplied cognitive and evaluative elements that have been incorporated into Thai culture, built into the Thai social fabric, and internalized into the personalities of individual Thais. The values - (conceptions) acquired in the context of the Buddhist religion have been generalized and applied to non-religious, non-religious spheres. One might view Buddhism as providing a "cultural gyroscope" which has served to shape and direct the major facets of Thai culture and society. In this sense, the social focus of Buddhism could be characterized as the centrality of Thai society.

Brahmanic Elements in Thai Religion

It should have Thai religion have noted the existence of a number of beliefs and practices which are not indigenous, because they are clearly derived from an Indian tradition - yet cannot be unequivocally identified as "Buddhist". I have labelled such beliefs and practices "Brahmanic". Two main components of a Brahmanistic complex can be distinguished. One closely tied to royal institutions and the capital city, is "Court" Brahmanism; the other more widely diffused throughout Thai society, I term "Folk Brahmanism". My concern is here, with primarily with latter component, however, a few comments on "Court Brahmanism" are in order.

Inscriptions and certain Brahmanistic elements were present in early Thai societies along with Buddhism and indigenous elements. It appears that, as the state of Ayutthaya expanded and became more powerful, Brahmanistic elements (presumably borrowed from the Khmer) were used to enhance the prestige of the Thai kingship. In this latter function, certainly, when the Thai conquered the Khmer kingdom of Ayutthaya, large numbers of Khmer, including sacerdotal officials and bureaucrats, were transported to Ayutthaya and incorporated into the state structure. The Thai court adopted numerous Brahmanistic elements.

large to work for in the kingdom or synodizing
the society concern for and control over their aspects
of society such as agricultural fertility -
an "ethnic kingdom ritual" and a "Tiro Phungphung"
(vāg nā) ceremony, for example. Although used

of Brahmanistic rituals were confined but
in an official, some - for instance,
Pūsare (phīn lō khek) ceremony - were
very popular for a time. Some of these cer-
emonies have been continued into modern
period, and "Court Brahman" and
old songs still play some role at royal
court.

It is not clear precisely when or through
what means the folk Brahman complex was
incorporated into Thai religious pattern.
It could represent a survival from an
earlier "Hinduized" period in Thai society, or
it might be that later folk Brahman
rituals were differentiated from the elite to the
common people. In any case, folk Brahman
in Thailand is a pervasively - if not universal -
complex some degree on both speculative and
practical levels. Another
was introduced and spread simultaneously
with Theravada Buddhism. We shall see later
some of the extensive structural and func-
tional links between the folk Brahman
complex and Buddhism which might
support such a view. Unfortunately, to
explore such a conjecture is beyond the
scope of this paper.

Some contemporary village practitioners
of folk Brahman specialization claim their
rituals are derived from a Brahman
complex (Siddhant Pham). However, they
most certainly do not adhere to
Brahmanism. Indeed, such practitioners are
often more locally known as for Buddhism - exper-
ience or piety. Though we shall see close connections
between folk Brahman practices and beliefs
and those of Buddhism, the practices are
not viewed as one - making in themselves. If
technology or science is viewed more as
skill than as religion in the
folk Brahman beliefs also
appear to be grounded in a Buddhist world-
view, rather than in a distinctive world view
of their own.

Folk Brahman Local Orientation and

Moral View

The coherent Buddhist view of
moral order and man's place in the
universe - formulated by a number of key
notions such as karma and mettā
merit, popularized in such notions as
merit and merit-making, and per-
petuated by the songs and crys-
tallized in Buddhist ritual forms
concentrated in everyday life - is
accessible to all Thai. Although there are

and make up the individual.

Though Folk Brahmanism draws on many
cultural features of the Buddhist world-view,
there is one important aspect in which it differs
from Buddhism: its aims or goals. In contrast to
Buddhism (in ultimate terms escape from
karma, achieving extinction; more proximally,
gaining paradise or an enhanced rebirth),
Folk Brahman practice is more commonly
directed toward worldly problems, attainment
of such ends as good health, prosperity,
luck in some undertaking, or a happy and
unproblematic marriage. Folk Brahman practices
also come into play at various points in the life cycle
and in the cycle of the seasons. Despite the apparent
incongruity between its worldly focus of Folk
Brahman practice and its other-worldly focus of
Buddhism, these foci are not in opposition but
are closely intertwined.

Folk Brahman Ritual

Folk Brahmanism has no distinctive and
coherent world-view which distinguishes it
from Buddhism; its beliefs and practices
are based on conceptions and values
drawn from Buddhism. In this sense, Folk
Brahmanism does not constitute a separate and
distinct religious system vis-à-vis
Buddhism. Folk rituals consist of a number of
distinct ritual complexes and can be
seen to embody Buddhist values and beliefs.
Because of its close ties to Buddhism,
and the focus of problems Folk Brahmanism
addresses, it might be seen as a kind of
"religion" or sub-worldly arm of Buddhism
proper.

Folk Buddhist rituals are organized
to be automatically effective on
the underlying basis, Folk Brahman rituals
are also believed to be automatically
effective. That is, given the proper conditions
e.g. the user having correct information
regarding date and time of birth, the
ceremony being performed properly, the
desired results or correct advice will
follow; any apparent failures are
attributed to erroneous information
supplied or improper procedure followed
in possibly such of such of the particular
operation employed. Since successful
performances are likely to be remembered,
and any failures forgotten or explained
away, faith in the effectiveness of Folk
Brahman ceremonies is hardly challenged.
There are numerous highly specialized
books on Folk Brahman ceremonies
now available. However there are no
general ritual books that have been spe-
cially improved. The focus might be
characterized as legitimizing the
worldly involvement, as second involves
a therapeutic function.

[illegible]

There are numerous Folic Brahman specialists found in village religion, each practicing passing lineage for his own distinct skills. For example, in addition to the seen and unseen flying class, there are specialists in finding lost objects (mō hō) and "good luck doctors" (mō sō khō) who cleanse a household of dangerous

by the fact, fear of Ruman being so and how they to attack them who have, in a very subtle way or not often and very, or who are especially susceptible to attack (e.g., women with weak or disorganized Khwan). A number of practitioners attempt to cure those afflicted by spirits by conducting the spirits, placating them, and having them remove the illness.

Buddhism and Folk Brahmanism share an assumption that there is a determinate and knowable level of reality beneath the flux of the phenomenal world, and that later rituals are automatically effective. Buddhist exorcism is a level of reality that only intervenes directly rather than to be explicated and unexpressed. Even ancient practitioners like the spirit-doctors (mo, pho) might express doubts about the effectiveness of their rituals. This uncertainty is due not only to capriciousness of spirits, but also because spirit-doctors merely provided a medium or bridge to the spirit-world, she does not intervene. The uncertainty of ancient rituals may be why, when a spirit-attack, they are perceived to be a means of Folk Brahmanism and Buddhism have been exhausted.

Ancient Ritual

When an individual shows symptoms suggesting a spirit has attacked him (e.g., loss of appetite, etc.) or when a patient does not respond to other modes of treatment, a spirit-practitioner will be called on. The ritual for the person is then performed. The diagnosis is a spirit-doctor. The main task of the spirit-doctor is to communicate with the aggressive spirit-world. The spirit-doctor will make an offer to the spirit, and if necessary, each ceremony is followed by a general form. The spirit-doctor may choose to perform a ritual in a private and ungraceful way, accompanied by a woman. While she calls on the spirits, particularly the "familiar spirit" (yau), until a communication is introduced. She then enters the spirit-world and after a while, she returns. Many practitioners associated with the ancient rituals (use of whiskey, chanting and trance-like state) spread in direct opposition to many practices under of Buddhism (Sobriety, self-restraint), and of Folk Brahmanism.

Ancient Practitioners

In contrast to Buddhist religious specialists and Folk Brahman practitioners, spirit-doctors tend to be women. Although they may observe some peculiarities, they are not taboo, or charged with a lot of superstition. Spirit-doctors are otherwise indistinguishable from other

fellows. In contrast to what I achieved and Universalists the features of both Buddhist and Folk Brahman religious ideas, there are descriptive and particularistic elements involved in becoming a spirit-doctor. For example, as I believed was becoming a spirit-doctor is not voluntary, as it will manifest itself and I know doctors. A spirit "Ch'ó'ser" a woman (she is female), and coerces her by means of illness and even death. Some spirit-doctors claim that despite these threats, they believe in spirit's call. Until too weak to resist, some also believe that spirits show a fondness for women who are related, e.g., sisters, mother and daughter, aunt and niece. Taking on a Buddhist or Folk Brahman role by practicing involves some measure of learning of chants, techniques, or other lore. My contrast popular belief that it is not spirit-doctoring all necessary skills like spirit-doctor, so no learning involved in her part.

Occasionally several spirit-doctors may come together to perform a ceremony at which they collectively "feed" their spirits (chiang phi). But primarily, spirit-doctors act as individuals, they do not form a distinct organization or group which acts to elaborate and perpetuate a distinctive ancestor cosmology or world-view, as does the Sangha for Buddhism. The perpetuation of ancestor beliefs and practices relies primarily on the maintenance of popular beliefs about the significance, functions and importance of spirits. In its disregard of ancestor components of Thai religion, benefits from at least one Buddhist cosmology and belief has included spirits as a part of its formal and popular belief system.

Participative and Social Focus

Being a spirit-doctor is a part-time specialty, providing services to clients as needed. Except for an spirit-doctor, involvement with animist elements is intermittent and generally of low intensity, and supports are not routinely maintained. The main instance of collective involvement with animist elements is ceremonies choreographed by representatives of the village tutelary spirit (Intriguingly, the individual in charge of the ceremony, the Cao Cam pho phu, is a man, in contrast the dominance of females in their animist roles). A few generalizations: spirits, in his or her life. Women, children, and those in weak health are likely objects of the spirit's attention, and the period around childbirth is especially dangerous, for both mother and child. The impoverished are more likely to be involved in animist activities than the well-to-do, and less accessible regions are likely to have a higher incidence of animist elements than more accessible areas. In general,

where Buddhist and/or Folk Brahman involve-
ment and activities are high, animist involve-
ment and activity is likely to be low.

In contrast to the respect accorded Buddhist and
Folk Brahman features, though there is little overt
hostility, considerable ambivalence & expressed
about an entire animist domain, even by those most
deeply involved in it. Women except on a person in
charge of an altar or ritualary spots, most animist
practitioners have little respect or prestige among
their fellows. There are clearly deep-seated
cleavages between animist elements and
Buddhism and Folk Brahmanism. In many
ways which Buddhism values most highly:
asceticism, self-control and predictability.
The superior polarity of Buddhism over animistic
trends is taken as axiomatic by Thai. Monks
held to be immune from spirit attacks; and
Buddhist symbols, chants, holy water and
inscriptions may be used to overcome or to ward off
spirits or to exorcise them. Indeed, some
claim that spirits cannot harm any truly
devout Buddhist, lay or monk. However,
since Buddhist cosmology itself affirms
the existence of spirit-worlds, there is no doubt
about the phenomenal reality of spirits (except,
possibly, among the most sophisticated).

In contrast to the society-wide focus of
Buddhism and urban regional aspect of
Folk Brahmanism, animism tends to be highly
localized; malevolent spirits and spirit-
domains operate within a narrowly restricted
region. Hence animist elements display a
wider range of variability in beliefs and
practices throughout Thailand than either
Buddhism or Folk Brahmanism, although
similarities in form and pattern can be
discerned. Insofar as animistic elements
are effective, they tend to be individualized
to a specific locality, rather than being
viewed as a wider world and both Buddhism
and Folk Brahmanism.

Thai Religious Complexity: Components and Contrasts

Before turning to the historical dimensions
of Thai religious complexity, it might be
fruitful to summarize an analysis
of the Thai. The previous discussion was
not intended to be exhaustive, but
rather to single out a few major compo-
nents that can be analytically
disentangled in Thai religion. There
is a Buddhist, a Brahmanistic
Folk, and an animistic component.
I will highlight similarities and
differences between the components, and
suggest how they are interrelated.

to form a coherent Thai religious pattern.
The comparison and contrast are summarized
in Table I.

TABLE I Summary of Three Components of
Thai Religions

	Buddhism	Brahmanism	Animism
Goal orientation	Other-worldly	Other-worldly	Other-worldly
World-view	deterministic- centric	deterministic- centric	capricious uncentric
Ritual	Standard- routine	Standard- routine	individually- tailored
Specialists	predominantly- male	predomi- nantly male	predominant- ly female
Recruitment	conversion- based achievement	conversion- based achievement	particularistic ascription
Participants	laity	clergy	clergy
Involvement	conscious	intermittent	intermittent
Attitudes toward	highly favour- able	favourable	ambivalent
Social focus	whole society	bridging locality & society	highly localized

There are four important contrasts between
Buddhism and the two components of Thai
religion: Buddhism is oriented primarily to
other-worldly goals; its entire populace serves
as a laity for Buddhism; their support
for and involvement in Buddhism is constant;
and Buddhism's social focus encompasses
the entirety of Thai society. Animism contrasts
with the other components in five ways: an
animist world-view involves capricious and
unpredictable elements; spirit-practitioners
include women; such practitioners are
recruited ascriptively and particularistically;
animism is viewed with considerable ambiva-
lence; and its social focus is local in
scope. Folk Brahmanism appears to be interstitial
between the Buddhist and animist components.
As such, it does not present any distinctive
features that contrast with the other two
components, though it does share more features

in common with Buddhism and with animism.

The Buddhist and Brahmanistic components share several features: both involve a deterministic and predictable world-view; their rituals follow standardized forms and are thought to be automatically efficacious; specialists' roles are achieved and defended by universalistic standards; practitioners tend to be men; and attitudes toward both components are strongly positive. Though the social focus of Buddhism (beyond) is more exclusive than that of Brahmanism, the two are related. Folk Brahmanism serves to integrate regions and individuals into Buddhist system and to stabilize its relationship.

Brahmanism and animism share the following features: both are oriented to mundane this-worldly matters; participation in both is on a client basis; and involvement in and support of both's institutions, to share also to note that Buddhism and animism appear mutually opposed on all dimensions considered here, and animism contrasts with both Buddhism and Brahmanism on several dimensions; its esoteric and unpractical world-view; its fluid structure of its rituals; predominance of women practitioners; particularistic and ascriptive features in recruitment of specialists; and its ambivalence toward animism generally.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, the pattern of Thai religious complexity might be characterized thus: Buddhism stands at its apex over Thai religious system and forms a central part of Thai social values. Buddhism provides a coherent and integrated system of beliefs, practices and specialists, sanctioned by a codified orthodoxy, the Sangha, political authority, and at Thai masses. The Sangha perpetuates Buddhist values and beliefs, and stands as a proximate symbol and living embodiment of them. This through its religious Sangha and Buddhist ritual system that these values are displayed to be internalized in one form or another, by all Thai. Therefore, Buddhism penetrates all levels and sectors of Thai society. Buddhism provides at Thai with a unitary set of values and a common ritual and expressive language, uniting them in a larger Buddhist moral community that transcends particularistic and local loyalties and attachments.

Given its paramount position of Buddhism within the Thai religious pattern, both Brahmanist and animist patterns can be understood only in relation to Buddhism. In this regard, though Folk Brahmanism is made up of a number of

described and interrelated complexes, or might be
viewed primarily as a "sub-system" of the
larger Buddhisto-system. This view is supported
by the fact that in Buddhisto and Brahman
world-views are isomorphic, if not completely
coterminous. The Sangha, traditionally serving
as a major repository of Brahman expertise
and as a training ground of Brahman
practitioners, not only closely links the Brahman
component of Thai religion with Buddhist
institutions, but makes it very permeable
dependent on such links. Finally, Brahmanist
beliefs and practices serve to mediate
a number of basic religious problems
Buddhism poses for members of the Thai
Buddhist community. Buddhism does not directly resolve - or even
forming attachments; it has moral significance
of health, illness, and prosperity, and
involvement in mundane world. Indeed,
finally, Folk Brahmanism provides a system of
religious therapy, and also legitimated
involvement of the Thai Buddhist
in ordinary society without passing a critical
test of Buddhist commitment or of his own
basic morality. One can only speculate
about a situation in Thailand or anywhere
the Thai Buddhist society, in which there
were no mediating mechanisms such as
Folk Brahmanism provided between the
everyday world of Buddhism and the
mundane matters of the Thai Buddhist
are involved in. Perhaps understanding the
buffering role of Folk Brahmanism plays on
Thai religion - between abstract Buddhist
values and exigencies and particularities of
everyday life - helps to
understand in fact that formal Buddhism
is never found without a mass of "non-Buddhist"
elements present as well.

Among early students of Thai religion, Randall
and Le May were impressed with the apparent
persistence of animistic elements in Thai religion
over many centuries. Despite this undoubted
persistence, animism in contemporary Thai
religion appears fragmentary, disorganized and
unsystematic - particularly when compared
with other components of Thai religion. While one
can perceive some uniformity in form and
content, animism does not appear to be an auto-
nomous or coherent system of beliefs and
practices parallel to those of Buddhism and
Brahmanism. One exception to this generalization
may be where animistic features are
articulated with Buddhist cosmology and
beliefs. In this connection, animism might be
viewed as providing a "symbolic opposition"
to Buddhist conceptions of order. The capri-
ciousness and malice of spirits provides
an image of the realm of chaos and disorder
which might exist if a Buddhisto-order
did not prevail. However, the disorder

can again by animism given a part with the image
of Buddhist order, for the latter is more and
always to prevail. Buddhist symbols are
capable of exercising the spirit, but spirit
is in a fraction against Buddhism. Even
though Buddhist order ultimately prevails,
there is always the possibility of an anti-
Buddhist breaking through. This possibility
in fact, provides a degree of tension
release for those in whom Buddhist
places an unusual strain or who occupy
social disadvantageous position vis-à-vis Buddhism.
Such considerations may help us understand
at first - floating quality of animistic elements
in Thai religion, as well as a prominent place
which have in animistic practice.

This effort to characterize a pattern of
Thai religious complexity is undoubtedly
over-simplified. However, it may provide a
point of departure for a more extensive
investigation of variability within Thai
religion and for viewing Thai religion and
society comparatively, as one part of a larger
range of variability encompassing all
societies in which Theravada Buddhism is
prevalent. The pattern outlined above may
also help us in examining fluctuations and
shifts in Thai religion and society throughout
history. It should not be taken to imply that
Thai religion ever was, or is now, a neatly
integrated and balanced homogeneous
system which has persisted autonomously
and intact. There have been and
continue to be, tensions and strains within
and between various components of Thai
religion, as well as in their interaction with
other aspects of Thai society. For example,
there is a kind of tension between Buddhism
and animism which is a well-known very
fabric of Thai religion itself. If such
from its intricate tension, even undoubtedly
have been observed can be discerned in
the historical development of Thai religion
and Thai society.

In the following section, I shall propose
that an overall picture of religious
development can be discerned in a sweep
of Thai history. I shall note several points
where tension within Thai religion, or between
religion and Thai society, seems to have
occurred. Finally, I shall note some
possible changes in Thai religion and
society which may pose significant
problems in the future.

Historical Dimensions of Thai Religion

Complexity

In the absence of a precisely defined
record of the development of Thai religion
and society, I wish to show on a tentative and
perspective that can guide our speculations
at least with development - speculation
which can be checked against future
historical research. The theoretical per-
spective was formulated by M. Mauss in
his effort to understand religious

between an Great & and Little Traditions of India.
In India, Middle sources relationships, such as the
two distinct but complementary processes which he
terms "universalization" and "parochialization".
Applying these concepts to the development of Thai
religion highlights an overall process of religious
"upgrading", i.e. involving increasing Buddhiza-
tion of Thai religion and society.

Upgrading in Thai Religion

It is likely that, in their numerous contacts
with neighboring Khmer, upper-Buddhist Thai
encountered a variety of Indianized religious
ideas and institutions. Their own religious system
was apparently animistic, one in which spirits
were its major figures. The Thai adoption of
Theravada Buddhism during the 13th C. set the
stage for its subsequent development of a
distinctive Thai religious pattern and social
order dominated by Buddhist values and
ideas. My own speculation - based largely
on the numerous close connections between
these elements in contemporary Thai religion -
is that as Buddhism adopted by the early Thai
included some popular elements similar, if not
identical with, what I have termed Folk
Brahmanism. However, as suggested in a
previous discussion, there is a necessity for
some sort of mediator between abstract
Buddhism and its everyday-life problems
of the ordinary Buddhist. Noting that
contemporary Folk Brahman beliefs and
rituals serve its function may help illuminate
the common co-occurrence of purportedly
non-Buddhist religious elements everywhere
that Theravada Buddhism is found.

Ramaleah's inscription suggests that a
process of articulation between Buddhism
and an indigenous Thai religion took place.
Indigenous spirits (such as Phra Khaphung)
were identified with more abstract
Buddhist cosmology and belief - e.g.,
as evil spirits, demons, etc. A locally
spirit might be identified with a more
abstract Hindu-Buddhist entity like
Maes Thovani, a goddess of earth. Initially,
such identifications of indigenous spirits
with more abstract religious entities would
involve a degree of parochialization. By
conceptually identifying a proximate and
familiar spirit with a distant complex
abstract and universal cosmology, its
identity is made less abstract and more
concrete with an indigenous system of
beliefs. But such identifications
simultaneously involve a process of univer-
salization. The familiar spirit, now identi-
fied with a more abstract and universal
cosmological scheme, is upgraded to an
entity more distant than previously.

Buddhist cosmology is broad
enough to encompass virtually all aspects

or an indigenous Thai religion; however, its internal structure might provide a new, even complex and systematic order of relations between indigenous entities and beliefs. Whatever relationships had previously been thought to exist between indigenous spirits, their identification with Buddhist cosmology would make new relationships explicable in terms of abstract concepts such as Karma or more popular beliefs about merit. The parochialization of Buddhist cosmology and belief might make it easier to spread Buddhism in central Siam. But the attendant universalization of indigenous beliefs making it more complex and differentiable than it had been previously. I am proposing that the transformation of Theravada Buddhism into a more universal process of universalization and parochialization, in the process of spread of Buddhism among Thai people, and somewhat more recently transformed into religious and social systems, a certain process of upgrading.

Such a process of upgrading does not occur in a vacuum; nor does subordination, does it automatically continue. None can it be seen as a chance-for-all event; it is a continuing ongoing process. A central feature of the upgrading process in Thai religion is the continued existence of Buddhist Sangha. Monks are dedicated to the preservation of some degree of Buddhist cosmology and the penetration of Buddhist values and values into lives of ordinary people. We described earlier the perpetuation of the Sangha, and the Thai, supported by a variety of formal and informal pressures. While it might be useful to note of some Sangha inscription on an inscription of the upgrading process had already been activated, it can be seen as a continuing scene. The process of upgrading was not always even; and various points in Thai history can be taken to illustrate instances when the process was open to alternative directions or was responding to special situational exigencies.

The Thai religious and social patterns were elaborated and solidified during the long period of Ayutthaya dominance, from the 14th to the 19th Century. This period saw the elaboration and centralization of the state which was expanded and incorporated into Buddhist-dominated patterns. The Revolution of 1688 was a purpose to external events that autonomy and integrity of the pattern, causing its maintenance intact. The chaos followed the collapse of Ayutthaya manifested several intriguing problems for the expanded further. For example, one of the contenders for paramount power was Phra Fang, a monk who retained his monastic robes but sought political hegemony. His army apparently included men who also wore yellow robes of the monk class but their activities as soldiers.

was deposed by the forces of Taksin, who took over the Thai kingdom. On the one hand, Taksin sought to restore the traditional religious and social order with the aid of Buddhist and Brahman experts; on the other hand, he expressed heterodox views which weakened that order. Among other things, he claimed extraordinary religious qualities and regarded himself as venerable, thus reversing the traditional order of respect between monks and king.

Taksin was deposed and power was assumed by Rama I who also sought to restore the traditional pattern, emphasizing the dominance of Buddhism while legitimating Brahmanist and animist elements. Rama I was more successful than Taksin, and his successors continued to proceed of elaborating and simplifying the complex religious pattern, with Buddhism at the pinnacle. Rama IV, better known as King Mongkut, is another significant figure. He initiated a series of religious and social reforms which helped set a model for upholding the social order after the Sangha, modifying certain royal ceremonies to conform more closely to Buddhist ideas of kingship, and the denigration of cosmology and astrology. Mongkut's reforms encouraged the Buddhistization process, and his interest in these reforms was continued by his successors — particularly his son King Chulalongkorn, modern world.

Changes in Modern Thai Religion and Society

King Chulalongkorn continued his religious and social reforms initiated by his father. For example, he formalized Mongkut's Sangha reforms by recognizing the Thammayut "reform" group as a part of the larger Thai Sangha, in addition to the Mahaniketan monks, who follow a more traditional mode of monastic discipline. Thammayut-monks and temples subsequently spread throughout the kingdom, serving as exemplars of a more rigorous monastic discipline. Chulalongkorn also sought to rationalize the administrative structure of the kingdom, and he established a national secular school system. Traditionally placed within the temple, this new development freed monks to pursue his so. Chulalongkorn also initiated the rationalization and centralization of the Sangha, paralleling the organization of the government. National standards were set for monks, and eventually Buddhist universities were located in Bangkok to improve their training. More recently, the central government has sought to involve the Sangha in national efforts to develop the country, and to encourage monks as religious and moral leaders to lead Buddhist minorities in the kingdom.

The overall trend of modern development has been to emphasize the central position of Buddhism in Thai religion and society, and to elevate the level of religious

of an indigenous Thai religion; however, its internal structure might provide a new, more complex and systematic order of relations between indigenous entities and beliefs, whatever relationships had previously been thought to exist between indigenous spirits, their identification with Buddhist cosmology would make these relationships explicable in terms of abstract concepts such as Karma or more popular beliefs about merit. The parochialization of Buddhist cosmology and belief might make it easier to spread Buddhism in central Thailand. But its alienation and universalization of indigenous beliefs could only serve to transform the religious scene, making it more complex and differentiated than it had been previously. I am proposing that the transformation of the vacillating Buddhist sub-canonization into the processes of universalization and parochialization, which facilitated the spread of Buddhism among the Thai people, and which were thereby transformed into religious and social systems, is the process of "upgrading".

Such a process of upgrading does not occur in a vacuum; nor does sub-canonization, does it automatically continue. None can be seen as a chance-for-all event; it is a continuing ongoing process. A central feature of the upgrading process in Thai religion is its continued existence of Buddhist Sangha. Monks are dedicated to the preservation of some degree of Buddhist cosmology and the penetration of Buddhist values and ideas into the lives of ordinary people. We described earlier the interpretation of the Sangha, and the order it represents, is a widely held value of all Thai, supported by a variety of formal and informal pressures. While it might be useful to state of Rongkarnhaeng's inscription an indicating that the upgrading process had already been activated, it can be seen as continuing throughout Thai history and culture contemporary even. The process of upgrading was not always even; and various points in Thai history can be taken to illustrate instances when the process was open to alternative directions or was responding to special situational exigencies.

The Thai religious and social pattern was elaborated and stabilized during a long period of Ayutthayan dominance, from the 14th to the 19th Century. This period saw the elaboration of Court Brahmanism as the state was expanded and centralized, and more and more Thais were incorporated into the Buddhist-dominated pattern. The Revolution of 1688 was a response to external threats to autonomy and integrity of the pattern, ensuring its maintenance intact. The chaos followed the collapse of Ayutthayan manuscripts several intriguing problems to be explained further. For example, one of the contenders for paramount power was Phra Fang, a monk who retained his monastic robes but sought political hegemony. His army apparently included men who also wore yellow robes of the monks' class and activities as soldiers. Phra Fang

was deposed by the forces of Taksin, who took over the Thai kingdom. On the one hand, Taksin sought to restore the traditional religious and social order with the aid of Buddhist and Brahman experts; on the other hand, he expressed heterodox views which threatened that order. Among other things, he claimed extraordinary religious qualities and regarded with respect and veneration, reversing the traditional order of respect between monks and king.

Taksin was deposed and power was assumed by Rama I who also sought to restore the traditional pattern, emphasizing the dominance of Buddhism while legitimating Brahmanist and ancestor elements. Rama I was more successful than Taksin, and his successors continued to proceed of elaborating and stabilizing the complex religious pattern, with Buddhism at the pinnacle. Rama IV, better known as King Mongkut, is another significant figure. He initiated a series of religious and social reforms which helped set a model for upgradation of social order after the Sangha, modifying certain royal ceremonies to conform more closely to Buddhist ideas of kingship, and the devaluation of numerous traditional beliefs about cosmology and astrology. Mongkut's reforms thrust other reforms was continued by his successors - particularly his son King Chulalongkorn, whose reign (1868-1910) brought the Thai into the modern world.

Changes in Modern Thai Religion and Society

King Chulalongkorn continued the religious and social reforms initiated by his father. For example, he formalized Mongkut's Sangha reforms by recognizing the Thammayut "reform" group as a part of the larger Thai Sangha, in addition to the Mahaniketan monks, who follow a more traditional mode of monastic discipline. Thammayut-monks and temples subsequently spread throughout the kingdom, serving as exemplars of a more rigorous monastic discipline. Chulalongkorn also sought to rationalize the administrative structure of the kingdom, and he established a national secular school system. Traditionally, education had been primarily religious, taking place within the temple. This new development freed monks from religious tasks and encouraged them to pursue his so. Chulalongkorn also initiated the rationalization and centralization of the Sangha, paralleling the organization of the government. National standards were set for monks, and eventually Buddhist universities were located in Bangkok to improve their training. More recently, the central government has sought to coordinate the Sangha's national efforts to develop the country, and to encourage monks as religious ambassadors to non-Buddhist minorities in the kingdom.

The overall trend of modern development has been to emphasize the central position of Buddhism in Thai religion and society, and to elevate the level of religious

sophistication within the Sangha. With some exceptions, the monks' religious specialization has been increased, providing an opportunity for upgrowing disposition. But this has also made being a monk a more difficult task than was previously the case. There is flow of men into and out of the Sangha may have diminished somewhat, though those who do enter may stay for longer periods of time and reach higher levels of religious sophistication.

Since there are close, ideological, structural, and practical connections between Buddhism and Folk Brahman elements in the pattern of Thai religion, any changes affecting Buddhism — especially in Sangha — are also likely to affect Folk Brahmanism. Modern trends encourage a higher degree of Buddhist orthodoxy for monks, which might well lead to the definition of much eclectic Brahmanistic lore as "superstition" or perhaps as "too secular" to interest the modern monk. And, if fewer men enter the Sangha and/or stay for longer periods of time, there may be fewer men available to learn or transmit Brahmanistic specialization and bring them back to the lay world.

One reason why Folk Brahmanism was traditionally tied to the Sangha was that most Brahmanistic ceremonies require a degree of literacy formerly available only in monkhood. With increasing national literacy, and expanded publication and dissemination of books dealing with subjects such as astrology, etc., core area of property of Folk Brahman practitioners is now made available virtually anywhere. Such general accessibility within the culture of the Sangha may actually devalue such knowledge and techniques, making them a game rather than serious business. If — any rate, the contemporary situation may break the close linkage that once existed between the Sangha and Folk Brahman skills. Even as this break has been taking place, the value of the curative functions performed by Folk Brahmanism has been undermined through more general availability of Western medicine; numerous "traveling" infection doctors" (ng ch'ya) are available to treat various symptoms and deal with exclusively through khwan ceremonies. Hence, the demand for Folk Brahman expertise may be diminishing as at some time but fewer individuals are trying to acquire such skills.

Various facets of modern Thai society have tended to undermine the Folk Brahman component of Thai religion. This has not involved any direct confrontation between such practices and "modernity," but rather a withering away of interest and support. The situation may pose serious threats to Thai religion. Earlier I argued that one of the main functions of Folk Brahmanism was to mediate, for ordinary Buddhist, between abstract Buddhist

and the exigencies of everyday life. If the Folk
Brahman component were to disappear, abstract
Buddhism would have to directly confront the
problems formerly met by its component of
Thai religion: affirmation of a basic morality
of the daily responsible involvement in the
mundane world, legitimation of the formation of
attachments in the world, and accounting for
the social implications of illness. Perhaps
this situation explains the apparent increasing
interest in meditation on a part of the
Lay Buddhists (and monks). At any rate
an immediate confrontation between abstract
Buddhism and the vicissitudes of every-
day life may be a crucial test of the
viability of Thai religion, a test which holds
both crown and promise.

Historical and contemporary evidence
suggests that an animistic component of
Thai religion has also undergone deep
attention, as Thai religion and society have been
increasingly Buddhistized. Since certain
aspects commonly attributed to animism
(e.g., the very notion of phi) are also included
in traditional Buddhist cosmologies, such
claims are not likely to disappear. If an
animistic component provides a kind of
symbolic opposition to the Buddhist
world-view, its perpetuation is linked
closely to the perpetuation of Buddhism.
And, if animistic elements provide
a measure of tension release from the
stringent demands on the individual, it
might even be that animistic mani-
festations could actually increase as the
consciousness of living in a modern world
also increases.

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30. See at Griswold and Prasert-series
Epigraphic & Historical Studies by A. B. Griswold & Prasert Na Nagara which has appeared in J. S. S. starting with LVI (1968).
H. H. Prince Dhani Nivat, *A History of Buddhism in Siam*, Bangkok: Siam Society, 1965, provides a useful historical overview of Buddhism in Thailand.
31. For example, various "Brahman" figures were prominent in the processions and carried in King on circumambulation of the old city walls in Bangkok, on the occasion of his 36th birthday in 1963. The first ploughing ceremony is still performed in Bangkok, though today it has lost some of its former spectacular character as a national ritual, E. Young, *The Kingdom of the Yellow River* (Washington: Conspectus, 1968) p. 64 f., 78 f., notes unpopularity of such Brahman ceremonies as the coronation ceremony, though such ceremonies have of now virtually disappeared among the people. However, the modern wedding ceremony followed in Bangkok has much Brahman symbolism. (e.g., pouring lustral water from a conch shell on to a bridal couple).